

The Baptist Record

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Long-time Mississippi church planter watches as harvest continues to grow from 31st church start

Fred Tarpley has planted, and God has certainly supplied the harvest.

Tarpley, 83, was present Oct. 29 when Old Rice Road Church in Madison County — the 31st church he has started — held special constituting services.

The Tennessee native has held pastorates and started churches in his home state and in Kentucky, but Mississippi is where his passion for church-starting can best be seen.

Ridgecrest Church was the first church he started. The church was located on Northside Drive in Jackson at that time, but has since moved to suburban Madison County.

Tarpley left his job as Metro (then Hinds-Madison) Association

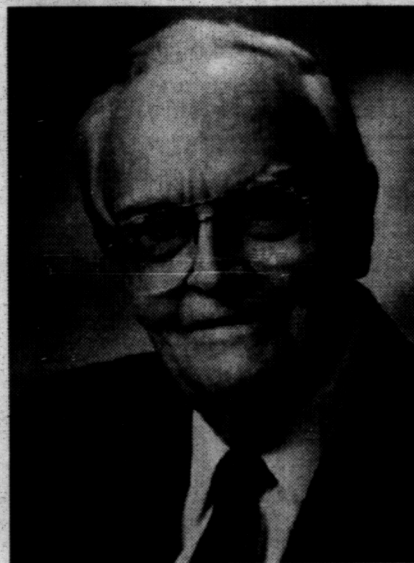
director of missions (DOM) to pastor Ridgecrest Church for 13 years, during which time nearly 3,000 people joined the church. Four new buildings had to be constructed within the first 10 years of his pastorate to accommodate the growing congregation.

He later returned to his job as Metro DOM, and Ridgecrest Church has experienced remarkable growth at its new location as the metropolitan area continues to move northward into Madison County. Phil Walker is Ridgecrest's current pastor.

Tarpley also helped start:

— Colonial Heights Church on Old Canton Road in Jackson. Richard Powell is pastor.

— Briarwood Drive Church on Briarwood Drive in Jackson.



Tarpley

David Merritt is pastor.

— Lakeshore Church on Rainey Road in Jackson. Matthew DeBord is pastor.

— Northminster Church on Ridgewood Road in Jackson. Roger Paynter is pastor.

— Trace Ridge Church on Lake Harbour Drive in Ridgeland. Ed McDaniel is pastor.

— Wildwood Church on Auburn Drive in Clinton. Mike Brister is pastor.

— Twin Lakes Church on Lake Cavalier Road in Hinds County. Bill Stanford is pastor.

In the spring of 1995, Ridgecrest Church and First Church, Madison, joined together to sponsor a mission at 82 Old Rice Road. John Temple is pastor of First Church, Madison.

Leaders of the two churches asked Tarpley to serve as the mis-

sion's pastor, and Old Rice Road Church was constituted with 42 members on Oct. 29, 1995.

Church members have since called Tarpley to be their pastor.

Old Rice Road Church currently utilizes two double-wide mobile units joined by a porch. The mobile units were furnished by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board and Metro Association.

Sunday School meets in one of the mobile units, and worship services are conducted in the other unit. The church has two well-equipped nurseries.

Tarpley lives in the city of Madison, and his wife Ann resides at Manhattan Health Care Center in Jackson.

They have three sons: John spent 15 years as a surgeon in Nigeria under Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board appointment and is presently a professor

of surgery at Vanderbilt Hospital in Nashville; Fred Jr. has taught at Georgia Tech in Atlanta for 34 years and is now serving as a dean; and Joe is a salesman who resides in Madison.

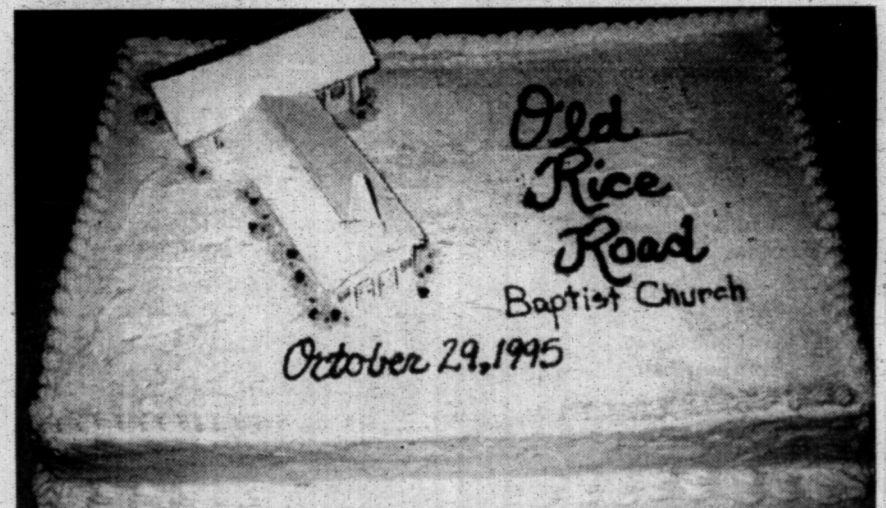
Eddie Hamilton, current DOM for Metro Association, said of Tarpley: "He's a modern-day Caleb. At 83, he still has a vision to reach people for Christ."

"The thing that impresses me about him is his energy," Hamilton said. "He still makes weekly visits, and preaches three times a week — he's an excellent preacher — all with an eye problem. He has to study with a magnifying glass, but it doesn't hamper his vision for Christ."

"He has certainly made our work stronger. Our association would not be as strong as it is without the 43 years of his ministry," Hamilton said.



Present at the Oct. 29 constituting for Old Rice Road Church in Madison County were (from left) John Temple, pastor of First Church, Madison; Phil Walker, pastor of Ridgecrest Church, Madison; Fred Tarpley, pastor of Old Rice Road Church; and Eddie Hamilton, Metro Association director of missions.



A special commemorative cake marked the Oct. 29 constituting of Old Rice Road Church.

College drinking

College freshmen entering so-called "party schools" quickly adopt the binge drinking habits of their peers, according to a study by the Harvard School of Public Health (HSPH) in Boston. The study, conducted at 13 colleges across the U.S. identified as having high rates of binge drinking, revealed 41% of freshmen who said they did not binge drink in high school admitted to beginning the practice after arriving at the colleges. Only 6% of the students said they anticipated getting drunk during their freshman year, but a few weeks later more than 50% of the study subjects said they had indeed gotten drunk at least once. That number rose to 68% by the end of the first semester. Of that total, 60% said they did something they regret while drunk, 55% missed classes, and 38% engaged in unplanned sexual activity under the influence of alcohol. A stunning 86% said they experienced negative consequences from another student's drinking. Henry Wechsler, HSPH director of college alcohol studies, said, "We must pay more attention to the students who no longer think that repeatedly getting drunk should be a college rite of passage."

Revival fire

Members of Indian Hills Church in Silver City, N.M., really do believe in the promise of Roman 8:28. The church was reeling from six fires in two years — five confirmed arsons — that had reduced their building to rubble on a concrete slab. That's when they decided to start a fire of their own. Pastor Don Grindstaff said church members held a lay renewal weekend, preceded by weeks of confession, brokenness, repentance, restoration, and healing. Then they began to study **Experiencing God**. Ten people were baptized. Church members voted to rebuild and bought six acres at the busiest intersection in town, between Wal-Mart and the local hospital. They don't intend to cower before the arsonists. "By the time we are through building, everyone in the county will know where we are," Grindstaff said. Jody Niccum and her husband John were the last people baptized in the church before the fires started. "God has really awakened us to his purpose for our church," she said. "We are definitely in a state of revival," said deacon chairman Don White.

Looking Back...

10 years ago

Jackson County Association schedules a pastor/church revival preparation conference in anticipation of the "Good News, America — God Loves You" revival campaign that is about to begin across the Southern Baptist Convention.

20 years ago

Acknowledging that "God owns it all," Cane Creek Church, Perkinson, dedicates new buildings to replace the old church complex that was destroyed when Hurricane Camille roared across the Mississippi Gulf Coast in September 1969.

50 years ago

Mississippi Baptist Convention President Norman W. Cox warns messengers to the 110th session of the convention that the state's Christians must come to grips with three problems: liquor, gambling, and commercialized Sunday amusements.

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Guy Henderson

Point and click

Remember the good ole days when a person's address was a simple "Route 4, Goshen"? Now their computer address looks like graffiti on the courthouse wall. Being "online" doesn't mean walking the white line down the highway, and the worldwide web has little to do with spiders. Today <http://www.goshen.net> BP can talk with <http://www.wmu.com/wmu> before you could look up the telephone number. Goshen no longer means the quiet little village in south Mississippi. It stands for "Global Online Service Helping Evangelize Nations" and is busy providing web sites to Christian organizations.

Communication indicates one of the more dynamic changes taking place in our society today. If Rip Van Winkle went to sleep in 1900 and awakened in 1990, just think of his mega-hertz shock. Moreover, if a man went to sleep in 1990 and awakened in 1999, his shock would measure in hyperlinks. If you are on DOS or Windows 3.1, much of the world has passed you by, clamoring for Windows95.

You may have enough capacity on your hard disc — say a minimum of 500 megabytes — or you may be shopping for something in the Pentium 75MHz. And you may as well order a gigabyte (1,000 megabytes) of hard disc storage and throw away your encyclopedia.

Now that is the kind of click and klatch you can overhear today in casual conversation, whereas it used to be: "You get your phone hooked up yet?" "No, but they promised it by next week."

Gigabytes, 15-inch Super VGA, 28.8 kilobits per second, Netscape etc., could have gotten your mouth washed out with P&G a few decades ago.

Cyberspace is just loaded with high-tech terms, and apparently you can never run out of vocabulary. Internet is a global network of computers linked by high-speed data lines. The web is a hypermedia information storage system linking worldwide resources. The web's "point and click" interface is popular and easy to use, says U.S. News & World Report (Nov. 13, 1995 issue). You can get on the web through online services like America Online, CompuServe, NetCom, Micro-Soft Network, Prodigy, and others.

Soon your home appliances, automobiles, insurance, and telemedicine will be in computer programs. How 'bout your fridge sending a message to the supermarket like: "Milk low, eggs needed, hold the mayonnaise?"

Thus, we have to decide to fight, flee, or face it. We will not be able to talk with our kids (whose number is Ltd/@mmm, ptbarnum/##42?).

Already when you say, "Write me a letter," they ask, "What's that?" It's change or arrange to be lonely.

Now CompuServe with its 30 million-plus Internet users can offer you 3,000 online services — and that was yesterday. Whatever its capacity is today, it will double in three months. With \$3,000 worth of equipment you can access the world. The gap between the "haves" and "have nots" will widen at alarming speed.

Your church can now access information on stewardship, youth programs, statistical information previously on the Annual Church Profile (ACP), and a plethora of others. You can communicate with missionaries in hundreds of countries.

The latest mission information is just a keyboard away. Already Baptist Press, Woman's Missionary Union, the mission boards, and other agencies have "home page" offerings on the Internet's worldwide web.

The Mississippi Baptist Convention Board is already "online" through SBCNet. You can call (800) 748-1651 (ask for David Wills or Wes Pegues) and get a megabyte of information. Now you can do your banking, shopping, and receive your news via computer. Soon you will be cruising the Internet and can say to the world, "http://wow, @ ph #4."



THE FRAGMENTS

Kid theology

Try a kid's eyeview of life's biggest subject. Sometimes things can be seen clearer through the eyes of a child.

Dandi Daley Mackall, in **Kids Say the Greatest Things About God** (Tyndale), gives us a delightful way to have your old stale theology refurbished.

Start off with: What does God look like? "How am I suppose to know? You gotta' use your imagination. He's indivisible."

How old is God? "God is as far as numbers go. He's too old for age."

And what does God create? "In the beginning, God created heaven and earth. Now he just does people."

We make the Creator sad when "His creation don't turn out too good — like my big brother, or... like cockroaches."

"God gets sad when you say bad words (like hate). He hates that."

Moreover, "Jesus is God, only with real fingers and toes."

He may have been "God's only son, but he still had to go to school."

And, "What do you mean Jesus is coming back? Nobody ever tells me anything!"

Consider the kid's view of prayer: "You can always reach him at dinnertime."

The kids even explain the difference between parents and grandparents: "Your grandmother's cookies come out of the oven, and your mother's cookies come out of a bag."

One of the scholars hit the nail square when he defined life: "Life is hard, like the song: My country 'tis of thee, sweet land of misery...."

Here is a tip of the hat to all who work with children. At least you know they are listening — part of the time. — GH

Guest Opinion...

America needs spiritual revolution

By Glenn Robins

The Republican victories in the midterm elections of 1994 initiated a political revolution in America. Indeed, the GOP, at least in its own mind, rode to victory on the merit of the Contract With America, and has since fought assiduously to implement the various components of its contract.

Shortly thereafter, the Christian Coalition, by its own admission a Christian lobbying group, announced a Contract With the American Family. Christian Coalition founder Pat Robertson has assured supporters of his organization that his staff is "working night and day" to pass their 10-point legislative agenda.

Finally, the message resonating from Ross Perot's United We Stand organization, which met in August in Dallas, was a call for a second Contract With America to address the issues with which that group is most concerned.

While each of these proposals has promised such commendable goals as widespread political

reform and social regeneration, the "devil" seems to be in the details.

Take, for example, the letters to the editor written to this newspaper in response to Michael Clingenpeel's "Guest Opinion," which addressed the Contract With the American Family and specifically the school voucher program. These rebuttals reflected a multiplicity of opinions and in some ways have demonstrated the fallacy of depending solely on a political revolution to initiate change.

This country — the world, for that matter — desperately needs a spiritual revolution and only the Holy Spirit can unite individuals for that purpose. Christians are not dependent on politicians to fulfill Christ's mandate.

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego did not form a political action committee when Nebuchadnezzar ordered them to bow and worship his golden image. The time has come for the thousands of local churches which form the spiritual backbone of this great nation to

reconcile their teachings to their actions. Moreover, local churches must match the energy and determination of the Christian Coalition and wage a two-front war against all forms of iniquity.

The Christian optimist will react to this challenge by asking, "What can I do?"

Recently, an interdenominational group in Huntsville, Ala., responded by creating the Life Home Ministries, a nonprofit home for unwed mothers who have chosen not to abort their babies. Local churches played a key role in the realization of this eight-year dream by completely furnishing the home which had been donated by J.V. Balch.

In Hattiesburg, First Church has included in its long-range planning report a proposal to consider "establishing a local medical clinic... to enable volunteers to minister to the medical needs of the indigent and homeless." This agenda would literally clothe, feed, and attend to the Master himself (Matt. 25:34-45).

There are sure to be naysayers.

Many critics of the private organization approach charge that there is simply not enough money to finance the needed services. The disciples held a similar attitude on a hillside in Bethsaida one day and Jesus responded by turning two fishes and five loaves into a feast for 5,000.

These doubting Thomases, however, can be converted. The people in Huntsville have proven that through prayer and commitment great things can be done. Hopefully, the people of Hattiesburg and First Church will duplicate the example set by Huntsville.

The real challenge is to convince those who feel no obligation

to the poor and downtrodden. Fortunately, the Bible speaks clearly to those individuals. Deuteronomy 15:11 says: "For the poor shall never cease out of the land: therefore I command thee, saying, 'Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy, in thy land.'"

Apparently, the Holy Spirit did not find it necessary at that point to explain why these people were poor, only to charge God's people with meeting their needs. Will we be obedient to his command?

Robins is a doctoral student at University of Southern Mississippi, and member of First Church, Hattiesburg.

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Virginia conservatives vote down new state convention

NORFOLK, Va. (BP) — Messengers to the Southern Baptist Conservatives of Virginia meeting Nov. 7 declined to launch their own state convention, voting 150-60 to defeat a motion by Terry Harper, pastor of Colonial Heights Church, Colonial Heights, Va.

Harper's motion called for the creation of a second Baptist state

convention in Virginia alongside the Baptist General Association of Virginia.

While the vote was lopsided against the motion, Harper said it was primarily a matter of timing that defeated the motion as SBCV messengers met at First Church, Norfolk, in their third annual meeting.

The SBCV was founded in 1993 with 13 churches; 144 churches were involved through giving and by their attendance at SBCV meetings in 1995, reported the group's literature. The literature also said churches affiliated with the SBCV desire to pledge their loyalty and support to the SBC, supporting the Baptist Gen-

eral Association of Virginia "as their conscience allows."

Bob Reccord, pastor of the host Norfolk congregation, spoke against the motion, expressing concern as to how the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) would relate to a state with two conventions.

Reccord also said he did not want to do anything on the state level that might interfere with the planned streamlining of the SBC approved by messengers to the 1995 convention in Atlanta, referring to the Program Structure Study Committee (PSSC) report, "Covenant for a New Century."

Reccord chairs the Implementation Task Force, the group that bears the responsibility for implementing the PSSC recommendations.

A few days later, Virginia Baptists approved with little debate an increased budget and a strategic plan for future ministry and elected officers without opposition during a quiet annual meeting, Nov. 9-10 in Virginia Beach.

The General Association of Virginia's 2,100 messengers took stands against a religious equality amendment to the U.S. Constitution and tuition tax credits, but declined to adopt a resolution condemning partial birth abortions.

In addition, they also inaugurated three new mission partnerships earlier approved by the Virginia Baptist general board — with Baptists in Panama, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia.

The \$15.4 million budget for 1996 — which becomes effective Dec. 1 — is \$400,000 more than the current budget and the first budget increase since 1992.

Little was changed in the budget, which allocates 62% to Virginia ministries, 2% to partnership missions, and 36% to national and international causes.

As in previous years, churches may choose among three giving plans for national and international ministries — one that funds SBC causes, another that supports ministries of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, and a third that funds a mixture of SBC, CBF and other ministries. In addition, churches may craft their own plans of giving.

Elected as BGAV president for 1996 was Clint Hopkins, pastor of Churchland Church, Chesapeake. Joining him will be Alden Hicks, director of missions for the Pennsylvania Association, as first vice president, and Catherine Johnson, an attorney and member of Monument Heights Church, Richmond, as second vice president.

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MC breaks ground for high-tech men's dorm

Mississippi College officials held groundbreaking ceremonies Nov. 20 for a new 144-room men's residence hall on the southeast corner of the Baptist-affiliated school's Clinton campus.

The 82,000-square-foot building will feature private baths, study rooms, and mainframe computer connections in each room to provide access to the Internet computer network, E-mail services, and on-line library searches.

The residence hall will consist of a main floor rotunda and a pair of three-story wings with a total

105,000-square-foot Healthplex, a joint Mississippi College/Mississippi Baptist Medical Center project that will provide health and recreation facilities to students, faculty, and Clinton residents.

"This building will be a beautiful, classical addition to our campus. We've taken care to ensure that we've selected a timeless

build the facility, located on land just northeast of Whittington Hall.

Ratliff Hall, a men's dormitory constructed in 1914, will be demolished once the new residence hall is completed. Plans call for Chrestman Hall, a men's dormitory built in 1925, to be renovated.

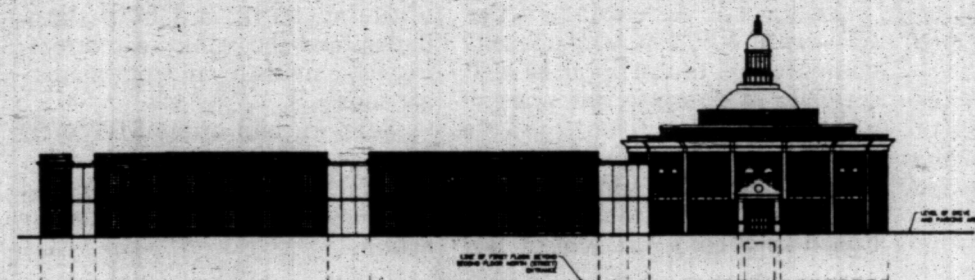
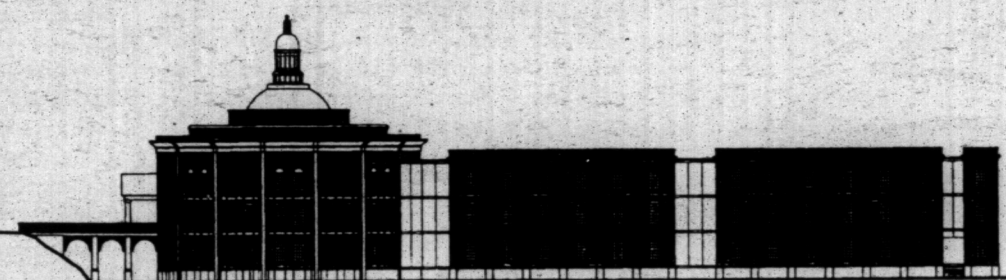
The result will be a net increase of 120 available residence spaces once the new facility comes on line in about a year.

Harry Vickery of Greenville, chairman of the MC board of trustees, said, "The new building to be constructed here stands as a testimony to our faith in the future of Mississippi College. We believe this college's 170 years of service is only the beginning."

Todd pointed out that the new residence hall is part of a long-range strategic plan for the campus that includes the recently-completed renovation of Jennings Hall and construction of a connector building that will link Self Hall to the Hederman Science Building and add classroom/office space.

The campus' tennis, soccer, and volleyball fields will also be relocated to another part of the campus under the strategic plan.

"At the foundation of that plan is our response to the needs of our students, and that includes giving them the best in facilities in which to live, study, and congregate. That will in turn help us continue to recruit the best students," Todd said.



of 144 double-occupancy rooms to accommodate 288 male students. The structure has been designed according to guidelines in the Americans with Disabilities Act.

The new hall will be adjacent to the just-announced \$9.44 million,

design which will never appear dated, nor will it cater to the building trends of any one era," said Mississippi College (MC) President Howell W. Todd.

Fountain Construction Company in Jackson has been selected to

Vans needed in Honduras

The Honduras Baptist Convention and the Partnership Mission efforts of the Mississippi Baptist Convention are each in need of a 15-passenger van to facilitate mission work in that country. The two vans need not be new, but must be in good condition, with good tires.

The Honduras Convention needs its van to carry out its support ministries; the Partnership Mission efforts would use its van to meet mission teams at the airport, take the teams to project sites, etc.

If you or your church can help meet these needs, respond to the Partnership Missions Office, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205; telephone (601) 968-3800 or toll-free outside Jackson, (800) 748-1651.

Exec. Committee adds members

The Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB) elected members of the Executive Committee at its post-convention meeting Nov. 1.

Members include MBCB officers Odean Puckett, Natchez, president; S.A. Adkins, Forest, vice president; and H. Frank Smith, Carthage, secretary.

Other Executive Committee members are Ken Anderson, Sallito; Steve Bennett, Southaven; Ed Deuschle, Bay St. Louis; Jim

Futral, Jackson; Frank Harmon, Newton; Dan Howard, Woodville; Bobby Kirk, Doddsville; Kermit McGregor, Mendenhall; Thad Moore, Holly Springs; Bob Simmons, Meridian; Paul E. Smith, Monticello; Robert Upchurch, Tupelo; and William B. Webb, Meridian.

Ex officio members are Jimmy Porter of McComb, Mississippi Baptist Convention president; and Bill Causey, executive director-treasurer of the MBCB.



Passing the presidency

Rex Yancey (left), pastor of First Church, Pascagoula, and 1993-1995 president of the Mississippi Baptist Convention, transfers the president's gavel to incoming president Jimmy Porter, pastor of First Church, McComb, at the end of the 160th session of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Nov. 1 at First Church, Jackson. Porter defeated Clark Stewart, pastor of Harmony Church, Crystal Springs, for the presidency by a vote of 635-590. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)



Old home week

Bob Terry (left), new editor of *The Alabama Baptist* newspaper, recently visited Mississippi College (MC) with his wife Eleanor Terry, a 1965 MC graduate, also holds the doctor of ministries and the master of divinity degrees from Southern Seminary in Louisville, Ky. He has served as editor of *The Alabama Baptist* since August, going to that position from Missouri, where he served as editor of *Word & Way*, Baptist newsjournal in that state. Mrs. Terry holds a doctor of philosophy degree from the University of Missouri-Columbia, and most recently served as senior associate dean of student affairs/director of the freshman year experience at William Jewell College in Liberty, Mo. The Terrys were greeted on the MC campus by Charles Martin (right), vice president for academic affairs.

N.C. Baptists split officers, OK record budget, partnerships

WINSTON-SALEM, N.C. (BP) — Officers were elected by razor-thin margins at the 165th annual meeting of the State Convention of North Carolina, Nov. 13-15, in Winston-Salem.

A record budget of \$29.75 million gained approval from 5,100 messengers, along with missions partnerships with two countries in southern Africa.

No nominee for the top three offices won with as much as 51% of the votes cast.

Gregory T. Mathis, pastor of Creek Church, Hendersonville, defeated J. Dewey Hobbs of Winston-Salem, retired director of Baptist Hospital's school of pastoral care, for the presidency by 96 votes, or 50.94% of the 4,880 cast.

For first vice president, Ann Smith of Greensboro, immediate past president of North Carolina Woman's Missionary Union, defeated Eugene Ridley, pastor of Long Leaf Church, Wilmington, by only 10 votes, 2,014 to 2,004, for 50.02%.

For second vice president, Kenneth Ridings, pastor of Grassy Branch Church, Asheville, won over Ray N. Howell III, pastor of First Church, Lexington, by 42 votes, or 50.45%.

Mathis, Ridley, and Ridings were supported by Conservative Carolina Baptists (CCB) although there was no formal endorsement of the candidates. Mathis said he was an unaligned candidate and Ridley has consistently rejected the endorsement of any political group in the state. Winston-Salem pastor C. Mark Corts, a former state convention president and CCB leader, led the campaign for the three candidates. The campaign included a letter of support

sent out in the summer.

Hobbs, Smith, Howell, and Lawrence Coleman, pastor of First Church, Laurinburg, were all publicly endorsed by Friends of Missions, a 10-year-old organization which has sought to keep the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) controversy out of the state.

Benjamin Gault, director of missions in the New South River Association, was not identified with either group.

Messengers overwhelmingly adopted a record budget of \$29.75 million for the state convention in 1996 which provides three plans of giving for the churches.

Plan A of the budget provides for a 68/32% division of all undesignated Cooperative Program (CP) gifts between the state convention and the SBC. Churches may exclude up to three items in the budget and still have their gifts considered CP funds. Through September, more than \$1 million had been excluded from the SBC under Plan A.

In Plans B and C, 68% of funds remains in North Carolina (as in Plan A) with 10% of the remaining 32% sent to the SBC (Plan B) and 10% sent to the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship (Plan C). The plans differ only at this point and both include allocations for special missions and theological education at universities affiliated with the state convention.

In presenting the proposed budget, Jack Glasgow, pastor of Zebulun Church and convention second vice president, noted 495 of the 3,033 churches contributing to the CP used the optional budget plans in some form during the first nine months of this year.

Texas Baptists shift 2.5% from SBC to state causes

SAN ANTONIO (BP) — By a nearly two-to-one margin, messengers to the Baptist General Convention of Texas (BGCT) Nov. 13-14 in San Antonio, approved a \$42.6-million Cooperative Program (CP) unified budget that increased by 2.5% funds for causes within the state, doing so by cutting 2.5% in funds for Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) causes.

The 1996 CP unified budget includes \$1.5 million to help start 1,400 new churches by the year 2000 and \$350,000 for theological education through educational institutions related to the BGCT.

Messengers to the 110th annual Texas Baptist convention also elected as officers: president, Charles Wade, pastor of First Church, Arlington; first vice president, Ophelia Humphrey, a layperson from First Church, Amarillo; and second vice president, Noah Rodriguez, a layman from Primera Mexican Church, San Antonio. All had been endorsed by the moderate Texas Baptists Committed organization.

Wade drew 3,842 votes, compared to 2,414 for Gary Miller, pastor of Sagamore Hill Church, Fort Worth. Along with first vice president nominee Casey Perry, pastor of First Church, Malakoff, and second vice president nominee Dee Slocum, pastor of Highland Church, Amarillo, Miller had been endorsed by Southern Baptists of Texas, an organization supportive of SBC leadership since 1979.

Texas Baptist convention messengers turned aside two attempts to amend the 1996 budget as proposed by the BGCT executive board. The budget calls for using 67% of CP receipts in the state rather than the 64.5% in the 1995 budget. The '96 budget devotes 33% for SBC national and international missions efforts, compared to 35.3 in the '95 budget.

The 1996 budget for Texas missions causes is an increase of more than \$1.6 million over the 1995 budget. Gifts to worldwide causes through the CP are expected to total \$22 million.

La. Baptists elect conservative, but defeat inerrancy amendment

LAKE CHARLES, La. (ABP) — Louisiana Baptists elected a president committed to conservative reforms but narrowly defeated a constitutional amendment that would install biblical inerrancy as the official stance of the state convention.

Michael Claunch, pastor of First Church of Slidell, was elected president with 52% of the vote (1,256 to 1,136) over Eddie Simmons, pastor of Sale Street Church in Lake Charles, host city for the Nov. 13-14 Louisiana Baptist Convention. It was the fourth time in five open elections that a president won by a margin of fewer than 100 votes.

Maurice Smith of First Church, San Marcos, a 10-year veteran of foreign missions in Ghana and 15-year employee of the Home Mission Board, spoke in favor of the budget proposal.

"Missions is not merely a matter of giving. It is a matter of strategy," said Smith, who also served 16 years as a Texas Baptist pastor and as an adjunct professor of missions at the seminary level.

Messengers defeated 3,954 to 2,193 (64.3%) an amendment by Jon Crosby of First Church, Little River, that would have restored the CP percentage for worldwide causes to its 1995 level; defunded the Texas Baptist Christian Life Commission, Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, and Baptist Theological Education Committee; and reduced the allocation to Baylor University by \$500,000.

Tx. conservatives meet after losses at BGCT

SAN ANTONIO (BP) — Southern Baptist Conservatives of Texas (SBT) met the evening of Nov. 13 after losing several key votes during the first day of the Baptist General Convention of Texas' (BGCT) annual meeting, Nov. 13-14, in San Antonio.

Organizers estimated about 400 people attended the SBT session at the Plaza hotel near the San Antonio Convention Center.

The losses included the BGCT presidency and messengers' approval of a 2.5% shift in Cooperative Program funding, or \$1.5 million, from Southern Baptist Convention causes to Texas Baptist initiatives to start 1,400 new churches and provide \$350,000 in funds for theological education programs in colleges affiliated with the BGCT.

Gary Miller, pastor of Fort Worth's Sagamore Hill Church, who lost the presidential race to Charles Wade, pastor of First Church, Arlington, Texas, in a 3,842 to 2,414 vote, told the group the CP vote should spark concern among BGCT leaders.

Miller said he estimated the CP vote at 60% for, 40% against, compared to the official BGCT estimate of a two-to-one margin of passage.

"If my church had a 60/40 split on a budget vote," Miller said, "we would go back to the drawing board and find out where we

missed God." Miller was quoted in a news release by John Yeats, newsletter editor of the conservative organization and pastor of South Park Church, Grand Prairie.

"It is unbelievable that we amassed as many votes as we did, when we were faced with the public relations full-court press funded with the CP money our churches gave to the BGCT," Miller added. "In time, victory will come. We're going to go home and do the main thing of leading people to Jesus."

Miles Seaborn, president of Southern Baptists of Texas and pastor of Fort Worth's Birchman Church, told the group, "Many have come to me and said, 'When do we form a new convention?' We aren't going to start a new convention. Many of the BGCT's largest CP supporters were supportive of us this year. We must build a greater, stronger network of smaller church leaders."

Seaborn added, "I love my brother and the Lord, but I do not have to fund my brother's folly. It is imperative we educate people with the truth and help them understand the value in redirecting their funds away from moderate causes."

Seaborn and other SBT officers are appointing a study committee to design what Yeats described as "a prudent plan for action."

Claunch, endorsed by the state's conservative group, campaigned on the need "to settle some things" in the state convention — most notably the convention's position on biblical inspiration.

But the constitutional amendment endorsing inerrancy — although submitted by the convention's Executive Board — fell seven votes short of the required two-thirds majority (1,435 to 724).

The 2,456 registered messengers did approve one change in the convention's governing documents — a bylaw amendment to prevent one person from serving in more than one elected or appointed position at a time.

Although conservatives won the hotly contested presidency, Louisiana moderates won both vice presidencies. Waylon Bailey, pastor of First Church in Covington, was elected first vice president by eight votes (749-741). Nelda Seal of Alexandria, retired director of the state Woman's Missionary Union, was elected second vice president.

Messengers approved a 1996 budget of \$17.6 million — the same amount as 1995. Also unchanged is the division of funds between state and national causes. The Louisiana convention will retain 65% of the revenue and forward 35% to the Southern Baptist Convention.

Other state conventions...

Arkansas, W. Virginia, Dakotas, Ohio, California, and Georgia

Arkansas

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (BP) — Rex Horne, pastor of Immanuel Church, Little Rock, was elected president of the Arkansas Convention Nov. 1 by a vote of 482 to 398. He defeated Stephen Davis, pastor of First Church, Russellville, and a trustee of the Foreign Mission Board (FMB).

Horne and his congregation gained national attention during the 1993 Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) annual meeting when a messenger challenged Immanuel's credentials because the congregation is the home church of President Bill Clinton. Bo Hammock, pastor of Providence Village Church, Lake Butler, Fla., charged the members of Immanuel were "by their silence, supporting Bill Clinton's endorsement of the homosexual lifestyle."

The SBC Credentials Committee voted unanimously to "heartily affirm" Immanuel "is in friendly cooperation with the SBC and sympathetic with its purpose and work." Immanuel Church, which has led Arkansas Baptist giving through the Cooperative Program (CP) for more than 30 years, ranked 13th nationally in total CP giving last year among all Southern Baptist churches.

During the same session in which Horne was elected president, messengers adopted resolutions opposing homosexuality and affirming the sanctity of human life. Horne, who has frequently shared his personal views on those subjects, said in an interview prior to Clinton's inauguration that "I have long supported the sanctity of all life." He added "the Bible clearly teaches that homosexuality as well as many other things are sins in the sight of God."

A total of 1,328 messengers registered for the two-day meeting. Next year's state convention annual meeting will be Nov. 19-20 at Geyer Springs First Church, Little Rock.

West Virginia

CEREDO, W.Va. (BP) — West Virginia Southern Baptists turned their convention's 25th anniversary into an occasion for missions boldness.

Messengers voted to hike the percentage of their budget devoted to CP missions and ministries by 1/2% for 1996 — and 5.5% for 1997 — and they participated in a FMB-related "MissionsFest."

A new book, *Go Tell It on the Mountain, A History of the First 25 Years of the West Virginia Convention of Southern Baptists*, was released at the convention and a free copy was provided to every church present.

The budget of \$1,617,936 for '96 passed in a hearty unanimous vote. Of that total, West Virginia Baptists will raise \$818,889, with \$577,317 to remain in the state

and \$241,572 (29.5%) to be forwarded to the SBC.

In a letter to SBC leaders in September, Jere Phillips, the convention's new executive director-treasurer, noted, "This is a bold increase for a small new work state convention."

Dakotas

MITCHELL, S.D. (BP) — "A Thousand More Than Ever Before" was the challenge given to Southern Baptists in North and South Dakota at their annual meeting Oct. 25-26 Calvary Church, Mitchell, S.D.

The 139 messengers to the 12th annual session of the Dakota Southern Baptist Fellowship (DSBF) were met with a challenge from Executive Director Dewey Hickey to an unprecedented simultaneous High Attendance Sunday in churches across the Dakotas.

Among resolutions adopted at the meeting was one recognizing two couples with longtime service in the Dakotas. William "Dub" and Imogene Bryant were recognized for 13 years as evangelism director for the DSBF. After serving in the same position for both the Dakotas and the Montana Southern Baptist Fellowship, Bryant recently resigned in the Dakotas to work full time in Montana.

Ohio

CINCINNATI (BP) — A key retirement and a key vote topped the annual meeting of the State Convention of Baptists in Ohio, Nov. 5-7 at Cincinnati's Pisgah Heights Church.

Orville Griffin, 63, the convention's executive director, announced his retirement effective Jan. 15, 1997. Griffin assumed the post in April 1992 after having served as the convention's associate executive director from 1981-92 and evangelism director, 1976-81. Including his work as a pastor and director of missions, Griffin has devoted 41 years to Baptist work in Ohio.

In a 179 to 75 vote, messengers decided to continue sending the convention's newspaper free of charge to members of Southern Baptist churches in the state.

A 1996 convention budget of \$4,689,863 was adopted, including \$3,777,863 in anticipated CP gifts from Ohio churches. SBC national and international missions and ministries will receive 40% of the CP funds, the same percentage as the '95 budget.

California

MODESTO, Calif. (BP) — For the second year in a row, an effort to refuse seating messengers from a church with a woman pastor was rejected on the opening day of the California Convention annual meeting.

But a series of related actions kept the issue alive during the

Nov. 14-15 gathering in Modesto.

Messengers attending the California convention's 55th annual meeting also elected new officers, approved an increase in the state's CP allocation to Southern Baptist missions causes, and formally welcomed Fermin Whittaker who was helping guide his first convention meeting as CSBC executive director-treasurer.

The challenge to messengers from Nineteenth Avenue Church in San Francisco was reported as the chairman of the CSBC credentials committee recommended seating "850 unchallenged messengers and 196 visitors" along with others who would register during the convention.

Georgia

ALBANY, Ga. (BP) — The Georgia Convention, meeting in Albany Nov. 11-15 with the lowest number of registered messengers since 1983, re-elected its president by acclamation and adopted a record CP budget of \$36.27 million.

The convention also cut back the number of days in its annual meeting from three to two, adopted changes in its standing rules to allow referral of motions in a manner similar to the system used at the SBC, and voted to enter home missions partnerships with the Chicago Association and Alaska Convention.

The meeting was generally free of controversy or even debate among the 2,839 registered messengers, with the exception of several attempted substitutions of names on the convention's committee on nominations report. In three challenges to nominees for at-large positions on the GBC executive committee, one was successful on a show-of-ballots, while the other two were defeated by extremely close margins.

The CP budget of \$36.27 million continues a 50/50 division of funds between Georgia and SBC causes, after a 10% allocation to ministries considered "shared responsibilities." The budget represents a 4.76% increase over the previous year.

Franklin Graham is named successor to dad's mission

MINNEAPOLIS, Minn. — Billy Graham celebrated his 77th birthday Nov. 7 in Florida at an annual Billy Graham Evangelistic Association (BGEA) board of directors meeting. Graham also affirmed he will continue as the chairman and chief executive officer of the organization, founded in 1950.

Franklin Graham, son of Billy and Ruth Graham, was elected to serve as the first vice-chairman — a newly-created position with direct succession to become chairman and CEO, should his father



Health Fair

Lloyd Sweatt (left), pastor of Duck Hill Church, Duck Hill, discusses health matters Oct. 31 with Debbie McElveen, a senior nursing student, at the Mississippi College School of Nursing Health Fair during the 1995 Mississippi Baptist Convention at First Church, Jackson. The annual clinic included screenings for a number of health conditions, as well as cholesterol tests, flu shots, and body fat analyses. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

Other state conventions...

Indiana, Nev., N.M.

Indiana

GARY, Ind. (BP) — Messengers to the State Convention of Baptists in Indiana annual meeting approved a 10% increase in the operating budget for next year, bringing the total to \$3,298,732.

In session Nov. 14-15 at Tree of Life Church, Gary, Ind., messengers also endorsed a three-year partnership mission agreement with Croatian Baptists and passed resolutions dealing with gambling, abortion, and gratitude for armed services veterans.

Steve Marcum, pastor of Graceland Church, New Albany, was re-elected convention president by acclamation. John Rogers, pastor of Eastlake Church, Crown Point, was elected first vice president over Evansville pastor Don Moore of First Southern Baptist Church. Ross Terry, pastor of First Southern Baptist Church, Lafayette, was re-elected second vice president by acclamation.

Registration at the convention reached a total of 257 messengers representing 106 churches. An additional 199 visitors reg-

Nevada

RENO, Nev. (BP) — Messengers at the Nevada Convention annual meeting experienced more of a celebration of faith than a business meeting Oct. 24-25.

The tone of the meeting was set in part by the preaching of Nevada pastors Steve Colquitt, Walker River Church; Jaffus Haley, Calvary Church, North Las Vegas; and Larry Dailey, First Church, Minden.

A total of 168 messengers and 60 visitors registered for the 17th annual meeting of the Nevada Baptist Convention. The theme for the meeting, at South Reno Church, was "Go Make Disciples... Live God's Word."

New Mexico

GLORIETA, N.M. (BP) — New Mexico Baptists enjoyed a harmonious annual meeting when 400 messengers and 277 guests of the Convention of New Mexico gathered at Glorieta Conference Center Oct. 31-Nov. 1. While messengers approved significant changes to the convention bylaws and those of its Children's Home, the most debated matter of business concerned the length and dates of future conventions.

Messengers approved a budget for 1996 anticipating \$2,814,186 in Cooperative Program receipts from the churches, a reduction of \$109,674, or 3.75% from the 1995 budget.

After an exception of \$69,000 in preferred items is applied, 30.5% of the CP receipts, an estimated \$837,282, will be forwarded to the Southern Baptist Convention for national and international missions and ministry. No increase in the percentage was recommended this year.

Other state conventions...

Penn.-South Jersey, Ill., Arizona, N.Y., Md./Del., Minn./Wisconsin

Pennsylvania-South Jersey

EXTON, Pa. (BP) — It was a time of looking backward as well as forward, of passing the torch for spreading the gospel from past generations to new generations as the Convention of Pennsylvania-South Jersey celebrated its silver anniversary Nov. 2-4 in Exton, Pa.

The need is great in Pennsylvania-South Jersey with 15 million people, with over 11 million of them without the gospel. In just the Greater Philadelphia Association, with 4.3 million people, there are more people than all of Louisiana, Kentucky, South Carolina, Mississippi, or Alabama, said David Waltz, the convention's executive director-treasurer.

Total expenditures for 1996 have been budgeted for \$2,156,255, including a Cooperative Program (CP) expenditure of \$617,231. The CP includes \$141,963 for Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) causes, or 23% of budget, up .25% from the 1995 budget.

Illinois

COLLINSVILLE, Ill. (BP) — While more than 900 Illinois Baptists focused on "Starting Something New" during their Nov. 1-3 annual meeting in Collinsville, an undercurrent of concern for Illinois State Association Executive Director Gene Wilson permeated the proceedings.

Wilson, 52, has been hospitalized in Springfield, Ill., for more than two months after collapsing and suffering a massive brain hemorrhage. He recently appeared to be awakening from a coma, according to reports.

The association's actions call for a 1996 CP goal of \$5.3 million, with 59.25% remaining in Illinois and 40.75% being used to fund

SBC causes, the same percentages used in 1995.

Messengers also elected officers, tapping Roger Ellsworth, pastor of Immanuel Church, Benton, and Vice President Eugene Gibson Sr., pastor of Mission of Faith Church, Chicago, for additional one-year terms. They chose a new recording secretary, Art Foster, an ordained minister from First Church, Eldorado, and assistant recording secretary, Annabel Woodring, a member of Meadow Heights Church, Collinsville.

Arizona

PHOENIX (BP) — Arizona Southern Baptists approved the election of a new executive director-treasurer and saw an extravaganza featuring a combined report of all state convention boards and agencies at their annual meeting, Nov. 14-15 in Phoenix.

Steve Bass, executive director of the Tulsa Metro Association in Oklahoma since 1992, was overwhelmingly approved by messengers as executive director-treasurer. He had been unanimously elected by the ASBC executive board Oct. 31. He will begin his new assignment after the first of the year.

A total of 604 messengers registered for the meeting. Tuesday Night Live was attended by a crowd estimated at more than 1,000.

New York

SOMERSET, N.J. (BP) — The 26th annual session of the Convention of New York met Nov. 2-3 in Somerset, N.J., utilizing the facilities of the Ukrainian Cultural Center. The theme, "All God's People on Mission," focused on the role of all believers being on mission, laity and clergy.

Sam Simpson, pastor of Bronx

Church and Wake Eden Community Church, was re-elected for a second term as president. James Goforth, director of missions for Adirondack Association, was elected first vice president. Norman Solis, pastor of Living Word Fellowship, Flushing, N.Y., was elected second vice president. Steven Blake, pastor of New Hope Church, Hurley, N.Y., was re-elected recording secretary and Peter Michael Arges, Baptist chaplain at Princeton University, was re-elected assistant recording secretary.

The convention adopted a total budget of \$2,703,243, with 26.75% of undesignated receipts going for SBC causes through the CP. This is an increase of .25% over 1995 and continues a pattern of annual increases in the percentage given to SBC CP begun in 1987.

Maryland/Delaware

TOWSON, Md. (BP) — In a meeting described as an example of trust and unity, messengers to the 1995 Baptist Convention of Maryland/Delaware reorganized the general mission board, re-elected a president and heard about a campaign to raise money for strengthening churches and starting new work.

During the Nov. 13-14 meeting at the Towson (Md.) Sheraton, messengers also passed resolutions on gambling, homosexuality, and the sanctity of human life, and decided to study the issue of human sperm banks.

Minnesota-Wisconsin

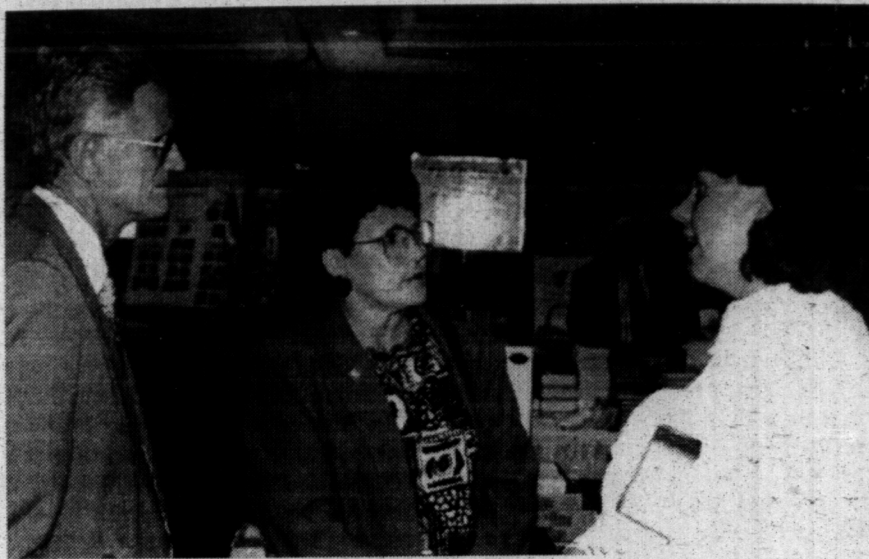
GREEN BAY, Wis. (BP) — The spirit of the Minnesota-Wisconsin Convention's 1995 annual meeting was as close and harmonious as the music of the women's ensemble from the host church, Highland Crest Church in Green Bay, Wis.

The Nov. 2-4 gathering was characterized by unanimity in business sessions, inspiration in messages and challenges to action.

Each new officer was elected by acclamation: president, Glen Land, pastor of Valley Church, Appleton; first vice president, Bobby Sinclair, pastor of Mount Hermon Church, Milwaukee; and second vice president, Larry Chaney, pastor of First Church, Clintonville. Re-elected unanimously were recording secretary Becky Dodson of First Church, Wausau, and assistant recording secretary Paul Berthiaume, pastor of Superior Church. All the officers are from Wisconsin.

The 108 messengers adopted without dissent a new constitution and bylaws. Previously the state convention governing document contained bylaws only. They also passed unanimously a resolution on racial reconciliation mirroring that adopted in the 150th anniversary meeting of the SBC.

A 1996 budget of \$1,658,437 was adopted, also unanimously.



Catching up

The exhibit hall at the 1995 Mississippi Baptist Convention provided a perfect location for old friends to catch up a year's worth of news. Bernette Fielder (left), pastor of Evansville Church in Northwest Association, and wife Jeanette (center) chat with Bobbie Cox, whose husband, Sam, pastors Cornersville Church in Union Association. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

Other state conventions...

Hawaii Baptists hold first 2-day convention meeting

HONOLULU (BP) — The Hawaii Convention's 53rd annual meeting, Nov. 9-10 at Olivet Church, Honolulu, marked a change to a two-day gathering from the traditional three days.

Paul Kaneshiro, pastor of Pukalani Church, Maui, was elected to a second term as president.

The recommendation to adopt a proposed 1996 convention budget of \$2,353,798 was referred back to the executive board for reconsideration because of the estimated shortfall in Cooperative Program receipts of \$67,000 during the first 10 months of 1995.



LifeAnswers

Ron Mumbower, Ph.D.
Minister of Counseling
First Church, Jackson

I was out with friends a few nights ago, and I saw my father going into a restaurant with another woman. I thought my parents were happily married. What should I do?

The confusion you are feeling is intense. Young people in this situation often feel as if a dagger has been thrust into their heart. We never want to believe this will happen to us, but it happens even in Christian families. (Of course, we are making the assumption that something more than just dinner is occurring.) This is too much for you to bear on your own. I strongly encourage you to talk about your feelings with a trusted adult, minister, counselor, or teacher. I would also warn you against discussing this with friends who are your age, because this is probably too much for them to bear as well. After you have received objective counsel, you can approach your father and tell him what you observed. Be honest, even if he denies that anything is going on. Explain how you feel betrayed and rejected. After talking with

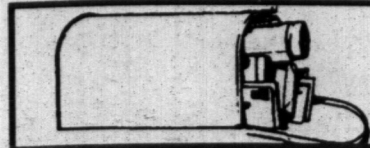
him, you can go to your mother. If he goes with you to your mother, that shows repentance and concern for you, but go without him if you must. What is needed here is accountability as a family. You are not responsible for your mother's reaction; you are telling her not to "get even" but to stop your brother in Christ — your father — from falling into sin. Family members should assist each other when mistakes are made, but if your father will not listen to you or your mother, someone else may need to step in and confront him. By all means, pray for healing and that God will work his will in the lives of you and your parents, their marriage, and your family. This situation is a strong reminder to Christians that the world is watching us constantly — especially the next generation. Our children look to us as heroes. They learn from us how to survive the difficulties and selfishness thrown at them by our culture. Therefore, "Be careful, then, how you live — not as unwise but as wise... because the days are evil" (Eph. 5:15-16, NIV).

Send your counseling questions to LifeAnswers c/o The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Please be brief. Name is not required. Remember: in time of crisis, your pastor can make recommendations on your counseling needs.

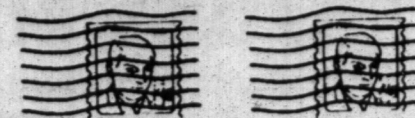


Fresh worship faces

Acts, Too is the drama group of the Mississippi State University Baptist Student Union. The group is available to lead church worship services and youth activities. Contact the MSU Baptist Student Union at P.O. Box BU, Mississippi State, MS 39762; telephone (601) 323-5761. Members are (from left): front row, Jamie Vickers, Starkville; Laura Curto, Collinsville; Angel Phillips, Eupora; Tracey Kilgore, Houston; back row, Andy Beechum, Tupelo; Dave Young, Asheville, N.C.; Ray Campbell, Columbus; and Melanie Tiffin, Starkville.



Letters to the editor



Letters to the Editor policy

Unsigned letters will not be printed. No multi-copy or form letters will be used.

All correspondence is subject to editing. Letters must be limited to 250 words.

No more than one letter will be printed during a three-month period from any individual. Each correspondent must include an address and the name of his or her church.

When in the judgment of the editor a given issue has received sufficient attention, correspondence dealing with that subject will be terminated.

In special instances, when to identify the writer of a letter might cause undue embarrassment, the name will be withheld.

Correspondents should refrain from personal attacks.

Call to accountability

Editor:

Amen to the [Nov. 9] letter questioning the outbursts directed at the Jasper County director of missions (David Abbott), regarding the Clarke College committee report. Is it possible that Mr. Abbott gleaned something from his work with the late Clarke College professor W.E. Greene, who preceded him as the Jasper County DOM?

If we practice Paul's "abstain from all appearance of evil" (KJV) ethic, then we should applaud the courage of Mr. Abbott. Perhaps the Mississippi Baptist Convention should engage a competent real estate developer, working on a commission where pure profit drives the transaction. He could convert this valuable property into cash, terminating our decade-long charade.

I am certain that if such accountability had been demanded in the Mississippi College case, temptations would have been avoided and the faith in our brothers involved would not have turned to grief. As church members who pay the bills, let's demand that accountability be a part of all transactions. Then let our leaders know that we do understand our ultimate responsibility is to God, but that we must have an interim procedure, with full accountability somewhere this side of the final judgment.

Donald R. Windham
Bay Springs

Hospital needs help

Editor:

As you know, many of the people who are patients at Mississippi State Hospital do not receive support from their families. We recognize this is espe-

cially difficult for them at Christmas. We are truly committed to making the season enjoyable for everyone. It is at this time when we reach out to our friends across the state for support. All contributions of time, talent, and gifts will be greatly appreciated.

One of the primary goals for this Christmas is to have gifts for all of the patients here at the hospital. Gifts and donations need to be received no later than Dec. 15. Our mailing address is:

Volunteer Services
Mississippi State Hospital
P.O. Box 75
Whitfield, MS 39193

[For more information], call (601) 351-8018. We appreciate your support and genuine interest.

James G. Chastain
Director
Mississippi State Hospital

Missionary blessings

Editor:

Mississippi Baptists will never know the joy you brought into our lives as we furloughed in what we consider to be the most beautiful state in the country. I guess if there is any complaint it was the quickness by which the time passed. From the time we exited the plane we felt the love and support of God's people coming alongside encouraging and lifting up a tired missionary family. It didn't matter how large or small, each reached out to do whatever they could.

My eyes blur with tears as I think of Henry Gordon, a retired auto parts store owner in Greenwood, and better known to us as simply "Brother," decorating a tree to insure that this missionary's family would have the best Christmas possible. The memories of a small church in Cruger putting together a place to call home even if only for three weeks while our furlough house in Brandon was made ready. Their love and acceptance so permeated that little frame house that when we did leave, my children wept. Little did we know that God would just do it again.

First Church, Brandon, would be waiting with the same compassionate care that we were leaving in Cruger. I have often thought that one of the saddest days in the life of my family was the day that we left that church. I guess the reason was that, from the moment we walked in, our hearts were at home. We found in that body of believers one of the finest pastors a congregation could ever have, Gene Henderson. I am crying and laughing at the same time even as I type this, for I must be honest: the title mentioned is just too bulky for a man like Brother Gene. He is as gifted an expositor as any I've heard, yet he's just as comfortable hugging one of my children as he is teaching a seminary class and the truth is that everywhere we turned the same spirit was found.

First, Brandon, was home and when we left, perhaps a part of us stayed. Many of the staff came to the airport the morning of our departure and watched the river of tears that flowed from family as they struggled to stay strong for us. My parents would fight back the emotions 'til after I stepped on that plane to ensure that my exit was as easy as possible. I put my family on the plane and had to return to the stewardess to sort out some paperwork. It was only then that I saw the staff and members of that church embracing our families, praying with them, and reminding them of their love and support. That, my friend, is the church. Maybe even more, it is what William Carey asked when he said, "I'll go, but you must hold the ropes." Perhaps for many of our great churches it is simply doing what comes naturally.

We are entering the holidays, and more importantly, a call to this great denomination to give sacrificially. Let me say as a missionary: "Missions is not easy, especially during the holidays." But we stand at the greatest moment in our history. There are opportunities that will never come again, and so we must all sacrifice. Please don't simply set a goal, pray for a vision!

The Jeffrey Parker family
28 Tremena Gardens
St. Austell, Cornwall
PL25 5QH United Kingdom

Headed for deception

Editor:

The controversy within the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) came about when Southern Baptist pastors and laymen with deep convictions and concerns found that those vested with authority and leadership in the SBC were unwilling to hear and address their concerns. Once it dawned on these pastors and laymen that the Convention belonged to the people and not to "those in charge," all they had to do was tell the people how they could again be "in charge." Their detractors loudly accused them of being nothing more than "political power grabbers." In spite of these frequent harsh words these very people have been elected and re-elected as leaders again and again by the messengers of the SBC.

This same controversy is beginning to erupt in Mississippi. There are a growing number of people who feel that they have no voice within the [Mississippi Baptist] Convention. Worse, they feel shut out and shut off from free dialogue in matters for which they have great concern.

No one thing illustrates this more than the rebuffs of our editor toward those who perceive an oftentimes negative tone in **The Baptist Record** toward the SBC (and its leaders) and a basically positive tone toward the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship (CBF).

An attempt was made to let the messengers of the state convention express their opinion on this matter, but it failed.

The resolution on the CBF and **The Baptist Record** was a "resolution" — it merely stated an opinion. It did not attempt to instruct **The Baptist Record** in what it could or could not do, nor did it ask that "no mention" be made of the CBF. The resolution simply called upon Mississippi Baptists to "acknowledge that we are Southern Baptists" and stated objection to the promotion and advancement of the CBF by **The Baptist Record**.

I, for one, do not wish to see our people deceived. CBF is not part of our denomination in spite of claims to the contrary. There is ample evidence of their very distinctive theological differences as well as documented proof in what they have done. They have created their own seminary to teach what they believe; created their own mission board to propagate what they believe; and hired the very leaders Southern Baptists have rejected to lead in these efforts. The fox is in the hen house — if we are not going to let him out — at least let's not help him carry off the chickens.

Bobby T. Hood, pastor
West Salem Church
Greene Association

Editor's Note: The CBF is still a part of the SBC and many CBF-affiliated churches generously support the Cooperative Program. The voting of the SBC cannot and does not determine who can be a member of the Mississippi Convention. **The Baptist Record** certainly acknowledges that we are Southern Baptists.

Words of a friend

Editor:

I would like to say a few words of appreciation for my friend, Bill Baker, pastor of First Church, Clinton, on the eve of his retirement from the pastorate. I have known Bill since we were pastors together in Calhoun County in the early 1970s, he at First Church, Calhoun City, and I at First Church, Bruce. Since I have known him, he always has demonstrated a genuine Christian character. He has been a man of truth. When his integrity has been tested, he always has passed the test.

Bill has built his ministry on a Bible-centered pulpit, and consistently has preached with excellence and scholarship. At the same time, he has been a loving pastor and able leader of his membership.

To sum it up, Bill Baker has been an example worthy of emulation. Untold numbers of us have been blessed because he has passed our way. I am glad to call Bill Baker my friend.

L. Edward Gandy, DOM
Alcorn Association

BWAid asks for help for Philippines in Typhoon Angela's wake

Baptist World Aid (BWAid) has launched an appeal for those suffering as a result of Super Typhoon Angela. Funds will be used to assist the Baptist Conventions in the Philippines to provide emergency assistance as well as long-term rehabilitation.

BWAid is still awaiting word from BWA member bodies in the Philippines on the extent of the damage, and on initiatives they are taking which need support.

BWAid Director Paul Montacute, indicates that "our Baptist brothers and sisters in the Philippines have a good record on using scarce resources to meet multiple needs. I hope that the worldwide Baptist family will support the Philippines at this time."

Australian Baptist World Aid (ABWAid) has already been asked by the Philippine government to assist in the town of Mexico. David Groves, ABWAid director, and vice chair of international BWAid committee, sent the following report to BWAid on Nov. 6:

"There have been a number of

typhoons through the Philippines this season, of which Angela is of 'super' wind strength, but we understand with little rain. Much damage has been occasioned by Angela, but primarily buildings that have been blown over, roads lost, etc., and service poles down.

"The long term damage is produced by the volcanic dust washed off the slopes of Mt. Pinatubo by typhoon driven rain. This is like transit mixers pouring concrete through your bedroom windows, and into every house in your street at the same time while it fills every street in your town. Many towns are under meters of this volcanic debris and they are buried forever. Future life will continue on a new valley floor that may yet be meters higher again, as there are years of mud-floods to come as the annual typhoons bring down more thousands of cubic kilometers of mud that will all become hard-packed volcanic fill."

Donations may be sent to: Baptist World Aid — Philippine Disasters, 6733 Curran St., McLean, VA 22101-6005 USA.

Just for the Record



Cold Springs Church, Collins, held its GA Recognition Service. The theme was "A Time to Grow." GAs (from left) are: first row, Misty Dickens, Meagan Leggett, and Caroline Thompson; second row, Jeana McKee, Jennifer Dickens; and fourth row, Elaine Layton, GA director.



Ecru Church, Ecru, recently held a recognition service for its GAs and Acteens. The theme was "Let Your Light Shine."

GAs (from left) are: front row, Emily Miller, Ashley Stokes, Shea Mounce, Amber Hamilton, Kelsey Reed, Chelsey Latham; back row, Patti Simmons, Nancy Skeen, Racheal Tutor, Abigail Hamilton, Kerrie Ferguson, Courtney Horton, Cindy Coker, Alana Reed, Vicki Crawley, and Ginger Hill.

Acteens (from left) are: front row, Crystal Stone, Stephanie Bigham, Kerrie Brown, Amy Hamilton, Becky Crawley, Andrea Baker, Miranda Andrews; back row, Jannie Hamilton, Nancy Flowers, Lecia Stubblefield, Rita Horton, and Becky Tutor.



RAs of Second Church, Greenville, recently received proclamations from Greenville Mayor C.C. Frank Self and Mississippi Governor Kirk Fordice, proclaiming Nov. 5-11 RA Week in the city of Greenville and across the state. Displaying the proclamations are (from left): back row, James Kerr, Washington Association Brotherhood and RA director; Roy Raddin, Washington Association director of missions; Pat Hagewood, counselor for the Dan and Betty Jo Hall RA Chapter; front row, Ben Edwards, Rainer Hagewood, Allen Sanders, and Robert Stokes.

Ballet Magnificat!'s 10th annual Christmas Festival will be presented at Thalia Mara Hall, Jackson, on Dec. 9 at 7:30 p.m. and Dec. 10 at 2 p.m. Also featured will be "Sound of Trumpet," performed by Phil Driscoll, and a classical pas de deux from "La Esmeralda." For ticket information, call (601) 977-1001.



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BIRMINGHAM, Ala. — **Woman's Missionary Union, SBC,** can now be accessed through a WMU Home Page on the World Wide Web, announced Patricia Ferguson, director of WMU's Information Services Department, Oct. 16. The WMU Home Page, which resides at <http://www.wmu.com/wmu>, provides an overview of WMU's age-level missions organizations and selected products.

The annual **William Carey Baseball camp** will be held Dec. 27-29 on the Carey campus. The camp will feature John Stephenson, former Carey coach and currently a coach with the New York Mets. Bobby Halford and his staff along with Texas Ranger farm hands Mandel Echols and John McAulay will also serve as clinicians. The cost of the session is \$70. For applications, call (601) 582-6110 or 582-6192.

An average of more than two motorists are killed and nearly 100 are injured every day on Mississippi roadways. Important information on steps to prevent such tragedies is available from a highway professionals' speakers' bureau. Sponsored by the Mississippi Association of Highway Safety Leaders, speakers from law enforcement, transportation, and other organizations are available free of charge to service clubs, schools, and churches. Call

(601) 359-7821 or write to Mississippi Association of Highway Safety Leaders, Division of Public Safety Planning, Box 23039, Jackson, MS 39225-3039.

Strengthford First Church, Wayne County, celebrated its 125th anniversary on Oct. 15. Former pastors who attended were Gale Anderson, Taylorsville, who presented the plaque to the church from the Historical Commission; Lewis Allred, Laurel; and Darrel Lloyd, Waynesboro. Also attending were Lynn Mackey, director of missions, and Mrs. Mackey.

Mississippi College will offer a Special Topics course to study the phenomenon of cheating. Sociology 403, which will be offered for the first time in spring semester 1996, is a new course which will examine why people cheat, and why cheating is on the rise. For more information call the Office of Admissions at (601) 925-3240.



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LIBERTY BAPTIST CHURCH, Flowood, Miss., is looking for a part-time Minister of Music. Please send resume to: Liberty Baptist Church, 5199 Lakeland Dr., Flowood, MS 39208 or call (601) 992-0345 between 9 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

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CHURCH PIANIST NEEDED: Contact First Baptist Church of Byram, (601) 372-3156.

Names in the News



J.C. Graves was honored on Aug. 13 by Roxie Church, Roxie, as pastor emeritus. He was the speaker for the morning message. A plaque was presented to Graves in the afternoon service by Vann Windom, pastor. A reception honoring Graves and his wife Mary Ann was held in fellowship hall. In attendance at the recognition service were his three sons, Andy of Louisville, Ky., Randy and family of Clinton, and John Paul and family of Springdale, Ark. Since serving in the ministry since Sept. 4, 1960, Graves has pastored Springfield Church, Union Church, and Hamburg Church.



First Church, Biloxi, celebrated the 25th anniversary of Leon Bedsole as minister of music on Oct. 1. Graham Smith, director of the Church Music Department, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, was the special guest for the day. The Bedsoles have two sons: Gary and his family live in Buenos Aires, Argentina; Brian will begin studies at New Orleans Seminary in January.



During its Oct. 28 Homecoming celebration, the Mississippi State University Baptist Student Union (MSU BSU) honored **Fran Herring** (above, center), upon her retirement after 17 and 1/2 years as secretary. MSU BSU alums, including Gary Permenter (above, right), 1995 alumni president; and current MSU BSU president Rob Smith (above, left), held a celebration and presented monetary gifts, flowers, letters, and poems to Herring. At the BSU alumni



meeting, new officers were elected: **Charles Farrior**, president; **Joe Armour**, vice president; **Geneva Nelson**, secretary; and **Billie Lane Hood**, treasurer. **Patsy Stidham Wilson** (above, left) was chosen 1995 Outstanding Alumna of the year. Ken Watkins (right), MSU BSU director, presented Wilson a plaque commemorating the honor. She has served on church staffs in Jackson, Starkville, and Columbus.



Don Stanfill was honored on his 10th anniversary as director of missions for Lafayette and Marshall associations. Stanfill (from left) and his wife Doris were presented a check of appreciation at the 75th Fall Session of Lafayette Association by William Tubbs, moderator.



Bill Hicks (left) has been named the Arts and Sciences Distinguished Faculty Lecturer for 1995 at Mississippi College. A plaque was presented by Glen Eaves, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

Revival Dates

Corinth, Heidelberg: Nov. 26-29; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Ken Jordan, Conway, Ark., evangelist; Richard Gavin, Laurel, music; Edd Holloman, pastor.

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Roach

Brenda Roach, who has served over 34 years as church organist at Oakland Church, Corinth, received a gift and roses at the annual Leadership Banquet on Oct. 9.

Brent Causey is seeking interim or supply preaching positions. Contact him at: 103B Los Palachios Cv., Clinton, MS 39058; telephone (601) 925-0561.



Johnson

George Johnson was honored with a reception on his 10th anniversary as pastor of First Church, Nettleton, on Oct. 8.

Linda Poore, a member of the youth group of West Laurel Church, Jones County, has been chosen to become a part of **Teen Quest's Q-Team**. **Teen Quest** is a monthly magazine published by Shepherd Ministry in Irving, Texas. Fifteen teenagers from the United States and Canada were chosen. Members of the Q-team will write and voice their opinions on issues that concern



Midway Church, Calhoun Association, held a deacon ordination service on Oct. 8 for **John Michael Harmon** and **Tobb Griffin**. Pictured (from left) are Chuck Shumaker, pastor; Harmon; Griffin; and Wayne Johnson, chairman of deacons.

and face teenagers in today's society. Her parents are Thomas and Carolyn Poore. Cary Worthington is pastor of West Laurel Church.

Other state conventions...

Tennessee Baptists adopt long-range plan

CHATTANOOGA, Tenn. (BP) — Messengers to the 121st annual session of the Tennessee Convention approved the recommendations of a long-range study during Nov. 14-15 sessions in Chattanooga.

They also adopted a \$26,969,276 Cooperative Program (CP) budget, elected Ken Hubbard, pastor of First Church, Smyrna, as president, affirmed Woman's Missionary Union (WMU), and approved reports of leadership committee

nominees despite a heated discussion and challenge to an executive board nominee with ties to the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship.

The CP budget, showing an increase of \$784,642, passed without amendment. It continues to allocate 62.5% for TBC causes and 37.5% for Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) national and international missions and ministries. Messengers approved by show of ballots in a close vote a motion

expressing "the mind of the body" that the executive board bring a 1996-97 CP budget with a half-percent increase to SBC causes and that the SBC portion be increased each year until 2000, making the split 60% TBC and 40% SBC.

The resolution on affirmation for WMU drew sustained debate. Four similar resolutions were combined by the committee on resolutions. The first presentation of the WMU resolution on Wednesday morning was faced with attempts to amend it to include affirmation of the Foreign Mission Board and Home Mission Board. Before the amendment could come to a vote, time elapsed for the portion of business, and it was continued during the afternoon.

An afternoon effort to table the resolution failed. Messengers then voted down the amendment and subsequently approved the resolution of affirmation by a large majority.

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MISSISSIPPI MISSIONARY STAMPS STRIKES AND KILLS PEDESTRIAN IN HONDURAS: (BP) — Foreign Mission Board missionary **Stanley Stamps of Prentiss** was driving from Santa Rita to El Progreso, Honduras, on Oct. 14, when his car struck and killed a pedestrian. Stamps drove to the police station and then spent the weekend in jail while an investigation cleared him of wrongdoing. Stamps recalled the horror of the accident, the uncertainties of being jailed, and the ways God used the situation to draw people closer to himself. The afternoon of the accident and the next day, the Stamps' telephone rang with calls from concerned colleagues and friends, both local and overseas. The prayer networks had been alerted at the Foreign Mission Board and in Mississippi. Later, letters from numerous friends and prayer supporters began stacking up. "I am profoundly grateful for the extensive network of prayer partners who daily pray for foreign missionaries. I know from personal experience what it means to be the object of concern in someone's prayers," Stamps said. His wife Glenna is from Hillsboro, Texas.

BSSB EMPLOYEES CELEBRATE "INCREDIBLE" TURN-AROUND: NASHVILLE (BP) — Year-end revenues for the Baptist Sunday School Board's 1994-95 fiscal year have exceeded earlier projections for a good financial year, and Nov. 3 was set aside as "Celebration Day" to mark the occasion with an employee meeting and coffee breaks hosted by executive management. Ted Warren, executive vice president and chief operating officer, said revenues exceeded earlier projections presented to agency trustees in September, reaching a total of \$247,814,000, compared to a projected \$244.5 million. The budgeted revenue goal had been \$243,405,000. President James T. Draper Jr. told the agency's Nashville employees: "The turnaround this year is absolutely incredible and phenomenal. A year ago when I stood before you, it was probably the unhappiest day of my life. I had to announce to you we had come to an \$8.2 million shortfall. That reflected some great needs and problems, and we began to address those problems."

BAPTIST WORKERS SEND CONDOLENCES IN WAKE OF RABIN ASSASSINATION: TEL AVIV, Israel (BP) — Workers in Israel related to the Southern Baptist Convention sent messages of condolence to government offices and to the family of slain Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin after Rabin was assassinated Nov. 4. Meanwhile, Southern Baptist Convention President Jim Henry was accompanying President Clinton's delegation to Rabin's Nov. 6 funeral, at Clinton's request. Henry, pastor of First Church, Orlando, Fla., was a part of Clinton's delegation to an October 1994 signing ceremony for a peace treaty between Israel and Jordan on the countries' mutual border. Southern Baptist evangelist Billy Graham asked Christians to pray that the hatred and violence that trouble Israel and the area around it will be replaced with compassion and tolerance. "The Jewish people have prided themselves that they have not had this kind of thing happen before," said Thomas F. Hocutt of Birmingham, Ala., administrator of Southern Baptist Convention personnel in Israel. "The most significant thing is that a Jew did this."

ANNUITY BOARD'S TOTAL ASSETS NEAR \$5 BILLION, BENEFITS RAISED: DALLAS (BP) — Reports of total assets approaching \$5 billion and nine-month earnings exceeding \$621 million were relayed to trustees of the Annuity Board Nov. 6-7 in a regular meeting in Dallas. Trustees approved a staff recommendation to grant a permanent 5% increase in benefits on Jan. 1, 1996, to people drawing life annuities (except variable annuities) and those receiving fixed-period benefits of 60 months or longer. Harold D. Richardson, board treasurer, reported net income of \$621,830,483 for nine months and participant contributions of \$184,483,317. Benefits paid through nine months were \$146,388,430, an 18% increase over the same period in 1994. Total assets stood at \$4,993,691,692, an 11.7% increase in 12 months.

ANDY STANLEY PLANS TO START NEW CHURCH: ATLANTA (ABP) — Andy Stanley, former preacher at First Church, Atlanta's satellite congregation in Dunwoody, will start a new church in the city's northern suburbs, according to a news report Nov. 10. Stanley, the son of First Church pastor Charles Stanley, resigned from the staff of First Church in August over concern about his father's leadership of the 13,000-member congregation during a pending divorce. He told the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* he decided to start a new congregation after considering job offers from other churches. "It was tempting to think about just walking away from all this mess and to have an office and a staff and a congregation and a building and a new start in a new city — and a salary," Stanley said, "because I haven't had a paycheck since Sept. 15 and who knows when I'll get one. But as I weighed the advantages and disadvantages, we want to stay." The new church will be geared to people who feel disenfranchised by traditional churches, he said. The new church has been incorporated as Northpoint Community Church, but that could change, Stanley said. It will probably not start until late 1996 and will be affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention.

Staff Changes

Malcolm R. Massey, who served as pastor for 44 years, has retired as of Oct. 1. Churches he



Massey

served in Mississippi include Antioch and Ebenezer, Holmes County; Harmony, Lincoln; Zion Hill, Copiah; Glen Allan; Southway, Brookhaven; West Jackson, Jackson; and Holly Bluff. A native of Copiah County, he is graduate of Mis-

issippi College and New Orleans Seminary. He now lives at 204 S. Cleveland St., Apt. 1, Brookhaven, MS 39601.

Dale Strickland has resigned as pastor of **Unity Church, Duck Hill**. He is available for pulpit supply or interim pastor. His address is 624 Summit St., Winona, MS 38967 or call (601) 283-3096.

Terry's Creek Church, Magnolia, has called **Dennis Lea** as minister of music, effective Oct. 1; and **Jonah Callais**, student at New

Orleans Seminary, as minister of youth and education, effective Nov. 1.

Doty Chapel Church, Shannon, has called **Tommy Dale Holcomb** as part-time minister of youth, effective Nov. 1. He was previously a member of First Church, Verona, and is currently a student at Blue Mountain College.

Hepzibah Church, Clarke Association, began to function again as a church on Oct. 29. **C.C. Burns** was called as pastor, effective Nov. 12.

Staying Well Informed

Good News for People Living with Diabetes!

Control Your Blood Sugar Levels for Healthy Results.

Recent scientific studies show that people with diabetes can reduce the risk of the serious complications associated with diabetes by simply controlling their blood sugar levels. For the 82,000 Mississippians who know they have diabetes, the key factors in controlling their levels are:

- following a specialized meal plan
- exercising routinely
- taking diabetes medication as prescribed
- using self blood-testing tools, such as a blood glucose monitor.

And taking control of your diabetes for yourself doesn't mean you have to do it by yourself. Participating in a self-management program could be just the support you need. For example, here is the success story of a 49-year-old man who decided to take control of his diabetes through a self-management plan. For the first few years of his diabetes, the man watched his intake of sweets and tried to keep his

weight down. Most of the time, he felt just fine and never really thought much about his diabetes. But when his blood sugar levels finally got too high, his doctor put him on medication for his diabetes. This kept his levels under control until he started to gain weight. Then, the doctor started him on insulin twice a day. But the man traveled extensively and found that keeping to a firm schedule for his insulin and meals was difficult. So he decided to join the self-management training program at the Diabetes Learning Center at MBMC. Today, the man is off of all medication for his diabetes and feels better than he has in years. Now he knows that learning how to use food and exercise properly is an important part of his diabetes management.

For more information on diabetes or to inquire about the self-management training program offered at the Diabetes Learning Center, call us at either of the numbers listed below.

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MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST MEDICAL CENTER

Uniform Power to overcome



By Andy Brasher
Acts 19

One of the most relevant questions that nonbelievers ask Christians is: Can the gospel truly overcome evil? In all honesty, it's a question that the majority of Christians do not like to answer.

The reason is simple; on the surface, evil seems to overpower the gospel. A brief review of world history and yesterday's newspaper tends to bear out that last statement. So, how are we to answer the critics of the gospel who pose such a menacing question?

The answer is: The gospel does have the power to overcome — one individual at a time. Every individual who is saved by grace has been empowered with the potential to overcome evil and transmit the gospel message. The power of the gospel is not communicated through a highly developed social structure; it is propagated through people who positively affect society by exemplifying the gospel.

Thus, the power of the gospel is within YOU! The power to overcome is within the heart and mind of every believer. It is only through us that the gospel can overcome and convert the evil that lurks in our world. In this week's lesson, Paul demonstrates the power of the gospel to overcome.

Paul instructs disciples of John (vv. 1-7). At Ephesus, the capital city of Asia, Paul discovered a band of John's disciples (John the Baptist).

It is difficult to understand exactly who had told them of John's message of repentance and baptism. Some have suggested that Apollos or Priscilla and Aquila might have originally spread the initial word of John to those in that worldly and pagan city. However, there is no need to speculate. After confronting them with the message of Jesus, the group of 12 was baptized in the name of Jesus. The baptism in the name of Jesus constituted their membership within the Christian community. In compliance with the spiritual dynamics of the time, Paul laid hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit.

Paul's leaving the synagogue (vv. 8-10). Paul entered the Jewish center of worship in Ephesus, and for three months boldly preached the kingdom of God. The Jews, probably only a handful who worshiped there, became obstinate with Paul's unrelenting message of the gospel. Evidently, these Jews were hostile to the Christian movement and spoke in contempt of it. Paul left them to their own demise, and turned his attention to the pagan Gentiles of the city for nearly two years.

Paul and the sons of Sceva (vv. 11-16). Within the Gentile community, the power of the gospel truly did overcome. The New International Version translates verse 11 as: "God did extraordinary miracles through (emphasis mine) Paul, so that even handkerchiefs and aprons that had touched him were taken to the sick, and their illnesses were cured and the evil spirits left them."

As stated before, the power of the gospel works through individuals like YOU! The gospel certainly was manifested in Paul.

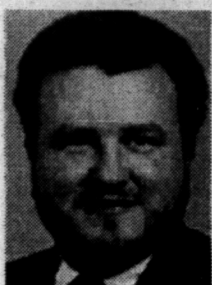
Exorcism was a common practice among the Jews and pagan cults. In Ephesus, some Jews traveled around trying to invoke the name of Jesus in the eradication of evil spirits.

So it was with the sons of Sceva. As they were confronting a man possessed by a strong evil entity, the man with the demon attacked and defeated them. The reason for their failure was they did not truly have the gospel within them (v. 15). Of course, Paul did!

The Ephesians' reaction (vv. 17-20). Due to this timely event, many Jews and Gentiles believed in the name of Jesus. Those who repented of their evil deeds behaved in accordance with the gospel message. The name of the Lord grew in power and spread throughout the land.

Brasher is pastor of Como Church, Como.

Bible Book A time for celebration



By Larry McDonald
Nehemiah 11, 12

Robert Schuller, in his book **Tough Times Never Last, But Tough People Do!**, told of the time he was in Paul Harvey's studio in Chicago as Paul was making his broadcast: "Paul said, 'It's time for me to go on the air; but why don't you join me in the studio? It's live, you know.'"

"I went in the studio. He closed the door. The red light was blinking. He cleared his throat.

"Good morning, Americans, this is Paul Harvey speaking." And away he went.

"He said, 'I happen to know somebody, a minister, who, I'm told, chose to fail in order that he could choose to succeed. Is that right, Robert Schuller?'"

"I said, 'Right, Paul Harvey. I chose to fail at golf, because I wanted to succeed as a father. Yes, I traded off my hobby of playing golf in favor of my desire to be a successful dad.'"

At this time, maybe you have to trade off power for peace, dollars for joy, and glory for the greater joy of seeing other people grow.

M.R. DeHaan told the story of how his uncle taught him to plow years ago. He said, "I watched him start preparing the ground. First he would make a 'back furrow' in the middle of the field. If this row was straight, all the others would fall in line. Finally the time came for me to try my hand at the task. I had often seen him go across the field as straight as an arrow. So I asked him the secret of his success. He replied, 'Never let your gaze wander from a fixed goal. Just look straight ahead.' Then, giving me the reins, he said, 'I'll stand at the other end and you keep your eye on me at all times.'"

Nehemiah gave up many things to reach the point of completing and dedicating the wall around Jerusalem. He was a successful governmental official with a good reputation. He was well taken care of financially. He left all of this to come to Jerusalem.

Some people in Jerusalem opposed him. They mobilized an effort to see this project sidetracked. They threatened the physical safety of Nehemiah and his followers. None of these obstacles caused Nehemiah to turn away from following God's leadership in rebuilding the wall around Jerusalem. He kept his eyes upon God's direction. Because of his resoluteness in following God's will, Nehemiah and the others were able to celebrate the completion of the task.

This began by resettling the city (11:1-2). Many people lived in the outer areas of Jerusalem. In order to repopulate the city, there was a need for people to move within her walls. The leaders set the example and settled in the city. Others came through casting lots which brought one out of ten people. Then others volunteered to make the move. These were commended for their willingness to move away from their familiar surroundings.

With the resettling of the city came the dedication of the wall (12:27; 30-31a; 43). The dedication was a time of great joy. The celebration included songs of thanksgiving, the use of various musical instruments, and a time of purification as well as an offering of great sacrifices. This rejoicing was so great the sound was heard a great distance from Jerusalem.

As a part of the celebration, they organized a system of providing for the worship leaders (12:44-47). They appointed men to be in charge of storerooms for contributions, firstfruits, and tithes. This went to support the priests, Levites, singers, and gatekeepers. This was done in accordance to the law.

In summary, the only reason Nehemiah and the people were able to experience the joy of dedicating the wall was because they were willing give up less important things and keep their sights focused on God's plan even in the middle of opposition. Remember, the only place success comes before work is in a dictionary.

McDonald is pastor of Castlewoods Church, Brandon.

Life and Work Profile in faithfulness



By Bob Rogers
Daniel 6

Washington, D.C., is a city that loves scandals. Nearly every major politician has enemies who are scouring his or her past for evidence of corruption.

One man in government who stood up under hostile investigation was Daniel, who lived in the sixth century B.C. As a boy, Daniel was taken into captivity in Babylon along with his fellow Jews, but his leadership skills under kings Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar of Babylon so distinguished him that when King Darius of Persia conquered Babylon, he made Daniel one of his top three administrators.

Daniel was so dependable that the king planned to put him in the number two position, and immediately the people who were passed over for the job went to work trying to bring him down. Daniel's handling of this crisis is a lesson to every Christian in faithfulness.

Live above reproach (vv. 3-5). Despite their efforts, Daniel's enemies could find "no corruption in him" (v. 4). Instead, verse 4 says that they found three qualities: "He was trustworthy and neither corrupt nor negligent."

In this day of hidden cameras and wire taps, how many of us would be found to have those three qualities? We can, and we should. Philippians 2:15 urges us to "become blameless and pure... without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine like stars..."

Daniel's enemies knew that the only way they could catch him was to put him in a position where he had to choose between his loyalty to the king and loyalty to his God (v. 5).

Refuse to compromise (vv. 7-11). The royal officials went to King Darius without Daniel's knowledge, and lied to him, saying all had agreed that he should issue an irrevocable "law of the Medes and Persians" that anyone who prayed to anybody other than the king in the next 30 days would be thrown into the lions' den. Darius gladly signed the law.

How many have compromised in such a situation? How many have said they opposed gambling, but then joined their friends for a meal at a casino restaurant? Daniel refused to compromise. He prayed three times a day in typical Jewish fashion (see Ps. 55:17), "just as he had done before" (v. 10). Verse 10 makes it plain that he did this after he knew about the decree: "Now when Daniel learned that the decree had been published, he went... and prayed..."

Daniel found the strength not to compromise on this extraordinary day because he had learned to pray on ordinary days. The words "just as he had done before" (v. 10) refer to 70 or 80 years of prayer during the reigns of Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar. Great giants of the faith are forged on the anvil of regular, daily time alone with God.

Don't give up (vv. 16-23). When the king gave the order to throw Daniel into the lions' den, all hope must have seemed lost. Yet Daniel remained faithful to the end. The next morning the king asked if Daniel's God was "able" to rescue him from the lions (v. 20), and Daniel answered that God had rescued him.

In Daniel 3:17-18, the three Hebrew children told the king that God was "able" to deliver them, but "even if he does not," they said they would still serve the Lord.

Yes, God is able to deliver, and in the case of Daniel, he did so. But what made Daniel great was his faithfulness, not his success. Hebrews 11:33 mentions that God "shut the mouths of lions," but Hebrews 11:35-38 mentions other faithful saints who only knew persecution and death.

God does not call us to be successful; he calls us to be faithful. Even Daniel was not completely successful, for King Darius went from the extreme of persecuting Daniel to the other extreme of forcing all people to worship the Lord (v. 26). Baptists have learned the hard way that without complete religious liberty, there can be no genuine worship.

Class activity: Read an encyclopedia article about men who stood up for their convictions such as Roger Williams and Dietrich Bonhoeffer. How did they compare with Daniel?

Rogers is pastor of First Church, Poplarville.



Pen Pal Club

Dear Pen Pal Club,

My name is Paige Zumwalt. I am a 10-year-old fifth grader. I am also in Stareach (a gifted program). I would prefer a girl pen pal. I attend First Baptist Church, Ellisville. I only have one brother. If you would like to be my pen pal, please write me.

c/o First Baptist Church
302 Holly St.
Ellisville, MS 39437

Dear Pen Pal Club,

Hi! My name is Abby Lammons. I am 8 years old, and I'm in second grade. I attend Pleasant Hill Baptist Church. I have one sister. I really like church. I would prefer a girl pen pal. I like GAs. If you would like to be my pen pal, please write me.

c/o Pleasant Hill Baptist Church

1249 Pleasant Hill Rd.
Columbus, MS 39702

Dear Pen Pal Club,

My name is Amy Shepherd. I am 9 years old. My birthday is Oct. 1, 1986. I am in the third grade and a member of the flag program. I enjoy car races, fox hunting, singing, going to church and to concerts. My favorite singers are Faith Hill and Reba McEntyre. I have one brother and I also have four dogs and two cats. You can write to me at the address below. Please send a picture if you have one of yourself.

c/o New Zion Baptist Church
Star Rt. Box 48
Braxton, MS 39044

Dear Pen Pal Club,

Hi! My name is Lydia Turner. I'm 10 years old and in the fifth grade. I'm in the gifted program, L.E.A.P. I go to The Living Epistle Church in Holcomb. I enjoy reading mysteries, playing the piano, and riding my bike. I have one brother and one sister. We have a dog. I don't care if you're a boy or a girl. Write to me.

c/o The Living Epistle Church
176 Goodson Road
Holcomb, MS 38940

Editor's Note: We have received several letters we would like to use in the Pen Pal Club. However, we can only print letters which list a church address. Please, include your church's address so your pen pal can contact you through your church.



Children enlisted to pray for Muslim world focus

Children are being enlisted for a worldwide Muslim prayer campaign that runs through the Islamic holy month of Ramadan.

A junior edition of the annual 30 Days Muslim Prayer Focus guide has been produced for the first time for the next event, which runs from Jan. 21 to Feb. 19.

Organizers hope that young people's participation will not only swell the number of people praying for the world's billion-plus Muslims, but also lead to a new wave of missionaries in the next century.

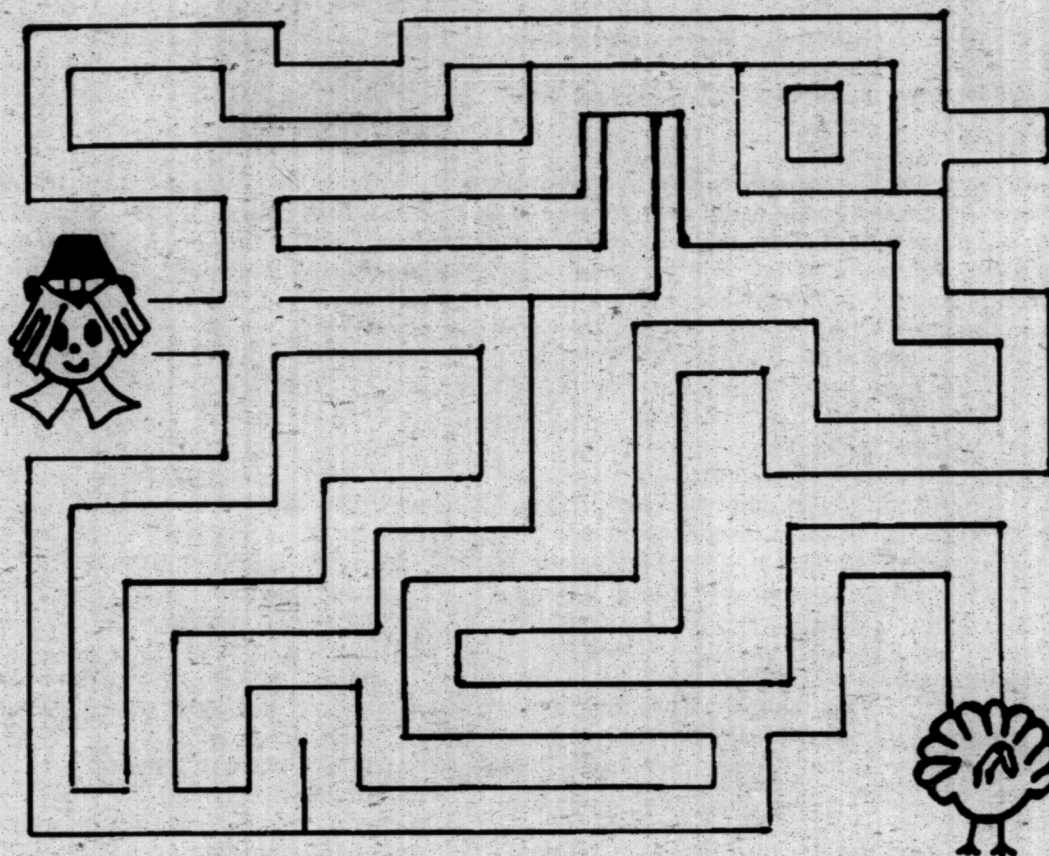
Well over five million Christians are expected to take part in

the prayer event, running alongside Ramadan — one of the five "pillars of Islam," a special time of prayer and fasting — as "an act of identification" with Muslims.

"A child's prayer can have just as much impact as that of an adult," said young guide author Jill Harris, children's missions education specialist with the Muslim missions agency, Frontiers. "When a child becomes a Christian he doesn't receive a junior Holy Spirit. They need to be raised up to understand that their prayers make a difference, and that God wants to hear their voices."

CHILDREN'S PAGE

Thanksgiving maze



Help the Pilgrim grab the turkey. Hurry, the Indians have just arrived and they are hungry!

Thanksgiving recipe —

Pumpkin Butter

You will need:

An adult to help with the stove
Pumpkin cut into 2-inch squares
Sugar
Water
Spices (cinnamon, allspice, cloves)

What to do:

1. Cook pumpkin until soft in a

small amount of water. Mash it to a pulp, like mashed potatoes.

2. Measure pumpkin and add 1/2 that amount of sugar. (Example: 2 cups of sugar for 4 cups of pumpkin)

3. Cook slowly to prevent burning. Add spices and cook until thick.

4. Serve on toasted bread.

Bibliocipher

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KEX RA TAA BATET, ROP RNT HNSA N
QYXXQA QPRAL XONM XOA NMSAQT VPL XOA
TEVVALYMS PV WANXO, JEPMAW RYXO SQPLD
NMW OPMPPEL; XONX OA KD XOA SLNJA PV
SPW TOPEQW XNTXA WANXO VPL AUALD
HNM.

OAKLART XRP: MYMA

This week's clue: Q equals L.

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: First Peter Two: Five.

Baptist Record

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